

THE SYNCRETISM-POLYTHEISM OF SAMUEL, SAUL AND SOLOMON: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY BASED ON SEMANTIC CRITERIA.

By

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Abstract.

The tendency of the ancient Israelites towards syncretism-polytheism is not only attested since patriarchal times, as it has been exposed in our first article. Incomprehensibly, and despite the clear warnings of Moses and the few monotheistic prophets that followed him, the fascination with the Canaanite religion not only affected the common people of Israel. Incredibly, also prominent figures in the biblical narrative, apparent followers of Yahweh, such as Samuel, the prophet, Saul, the first king of Israel, and Solomon, the heir of David, were tempted to some extent by ideas alien to the original thought of Moses. This paper is the second part of my contribution on ancient Israeli syncretism-polytheism.

A)-SAMUEL THE PROPHET.

At the end of the long period of anarchy in which the judges ruled, on the eve of the emergence of the monarchy, Samuel, the last of the judges, did not consider it wrong that the people, the prophets of Yahweh and himself worshipped their god exactly as the Canaanites paid cult to Baal and Ashtart, that is, on the high places. These בָּמוֹת (bamoth)¹ were not only natural orographic elevations, such as hills, but also artificial buildings, small mounds built within cities, as the Bible itself and the archaeological excavations have proven.²

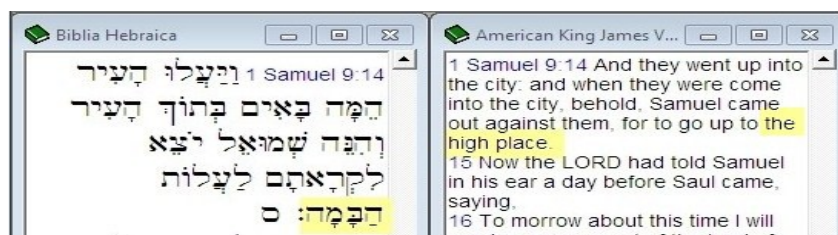


Fig. 1: Photo taken to the software Davar3, displaying two modules. On the left, the Hebraic Bible, showing the original script (it must be read from right to left) of the verse 1 Sam. 9:14. The final word of the text that has been highlighted הַבָּמָה is pronounced as habam-ma', which includes the suffixed Hebrew determined article הַ (ha) "the" and the noun בָּמָה (bama') "high place". On the right, the American King James Version (AKJV) module shows the correct translation into English as "the high place".

- 1 Semitic languages, of which Hebrew is a part, unlike Western ones are written and read from right to left. בָּמוֹת (bamoth) is the plural of the singular feminine noun בָּמָה (bamah) "high place".
- 2 Comp. 1 Sam. 9:14, where is suggested that the high place was "inside the city". See also chapter 10:5, which reports the high place within the city of Bethel. Concerning the archeological findings, connect to the following link https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/High_place

At the top of these *bamoth* the pre-Israelite Canaanites worshipped their gods, particularly Baal and Ashtart, offering them their sacrifices. But, from a meticulous examination of the historical narrative of the Bible, we realize that not only the common people of Israel on their own initiative offered sacrifices to Yahweh on the high places distributed in the various Israelite cities; strangely enough, Yahweh's prophets also prophesied by drawing inspiration from those high places.³

What's more, Samuel, who was the supreme ruler at that time, not only did he not prohibit this Canaanite custom, but, surprisingly, he himself encouraged it by participating actively. In 1 Sam. 9:12 it is expressly stated that the judge went to a certain Israelite city *"because the people had a sacrifice that day in the high place"*. The following verse clearly specifies that Samuel would go up to the high place to eat; that is, to eat part of the sacrifice. It is also said there that he was the one who *"blessed the sacrifice"*. In verse 19, Samuel clearly incites Saul to go up to the high place in order to eat with him of the sacrifice. The prophet communicates to Saul the very important determination to make him king of Israel there,⁴ after which verse 25 concludes that they both descended from the high place. Samuel's active participation in offering sacrifices on the high places, as this passage shows, contradicts the original teaching of Moses who commanded the destruction of all the high places of the Canaanites.⁵

Samuel's preference for sacrifice on the high places is a demonstration that most Hebrews, and among them some of the most influential political and religious leaders, did not conceive of the words of the first commandment as an absolute and universalistic monotheism for much of their post-Sinai covenant history. The book of Judges makes evident the religious volatility that characterized that whole period, and it is full of references in which the henotheist idea alternated with the polytheist one, and whose denunciations can be summarized in the stigmatizing statement:

3 1 Sam. 10:5.

4 Vv. 19-24.

5 Num. 33:52.

"And (they) followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them... And they forsook the Lord, and served Baal and Ashtaroth".⁶

B)-SAUL, THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL.

One would expect that after his election as king of Israel, Saul would take absolute control of the power; but there are indications in the Bible that this was not so, and that, although on paper, the supreme ruler of Israel, he was actually still under the tutelage of Samuel. As the prophet was the one who transmitted *"the word of Yahweh"* to the king; guidelines that the latter had to follow to the letter, it is presumable to think that the primacy of the elderly judge over the monarch did not disappear. Since there is no biblical evidence of any kind of religious reform undertaken by Saul, it is also very probable - I would say certain - that the syncretic religious beliefs fostered by Samuel when he served as judge did not change at all, and the king had to grant that Yahweh would continue to be worshipped in the same way as the Canaanites did with Baal; that is, on the high places.

In this regard, it is highly significant that in Saul's family there were theophore anthroponyms in honor of Baal. An uncle of the king had a name homonymous with that of the Canaanite deity.⁷

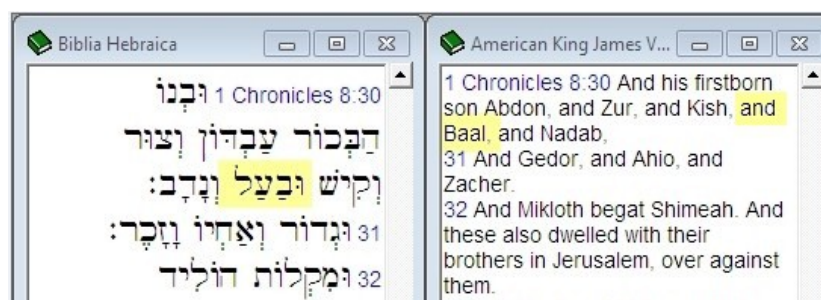


Fig 2. Original script of 1 Chr. 8:30. The highlighted word וּבַעַל reads *ubaal*, composed of the divine Canaanite name Baal preceded by the preformative וּ (u),⁸ which is the Hebrew copulative, equivalent to our *"and"*. The translation in the AKJV rightly reads *"and Baal"*, the name referring to an uncle of Saul.

⁶ Judg. 2:12,13.

⁷ 1 Chr. 8:30.

⁸ Pronounced as in put, blue.

His youngest son, Saul named אֵשׁ בַּעַל, apparently "*Fire of Baal*", so in the original Hebrew, transliterated by the AKJV as Eshbaal⁹

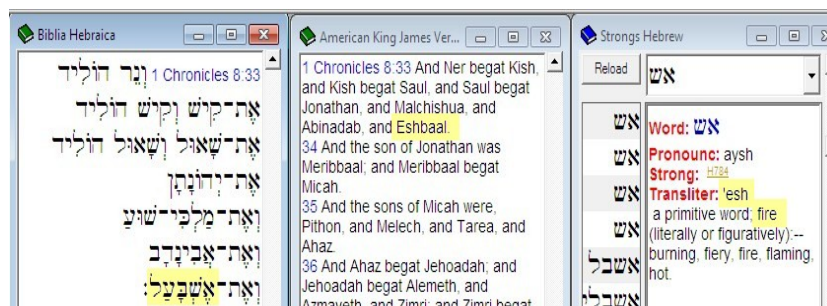


Fig. 3: The name of Eshbaal, Saul's youngest son as mentioned in 1 Chr. 8:33. The Hebrew anthroponym is not translated by the AKJV; it is only transliterated. Apparently it denotes "*fire of Baal*" since the word esh is indicated in the Strong Dictionary module (on the right), as meaning "*fire*".

Moreover, Jonathan, the king's son, named his own son מְרִיב בַּעַל (Mer-eeb' bah'-al) "*Baal contender*".¹⁰ The name of this man is particularly interesting. מְרִיב (mereeb) is a Hebrew noun denoting "*contender*" "*quarrel*".¹¹ Thus, מְרִיב בַּעַל lit. means "*Baal contender*", but in a positive sense; that is, "*the contender on Baal's side*".



Fig. 4. In the modules of the top row the name of Meribbaal is written, both in the Hebrew script and in the AKJV transcription. The latter does not provide any translation. Based on a textual parallelism found in Prov. 20:3, (showed in the lower row) where merib denotes "*strife*", which is synonymous with "*quarrel*", "*contention*", we substantiate our translation of the name as "*Baal contender*".

Our translation of this Hebrew anthroponym as "*the contender on Baal's side*" is fully justified by two explanatory facts. Firstly, this name was considered offensive by a royal monotheistic scribe who exchanged it for another highly pejorative in character, as will be seen in the next paragraph. Secondly, the

⁹ Ibid, v. 33.

¹⁰ 1 Chr. 9:40.

¹¹ Comp. Prov. 20:3, where the word is translated "*strife*", which is synonymous with "*contempt*" "*quarrel*".

right name of one who contendeth against Baal was not Meribbaal, but Jerubbaal. It was an epithet applied to Gideon, after having knocked down an altar of the Canaanite god that his father, Joash, had built at Ophra.¹²

That the names of Eshbaal and Meribbaal were given to them in honor of the Canaanite god or, in any case, of Yahweh who had already assimilated the name of Baal, can be proved by the correction made in 2 Sam. 4:4. Meribbaal is changed to מְפִיבֹשֶׁת (Mephibosheth) there, while in verse 5 Eshbaal is called אִישׁ בִּשְׁת (Ishbosheth).

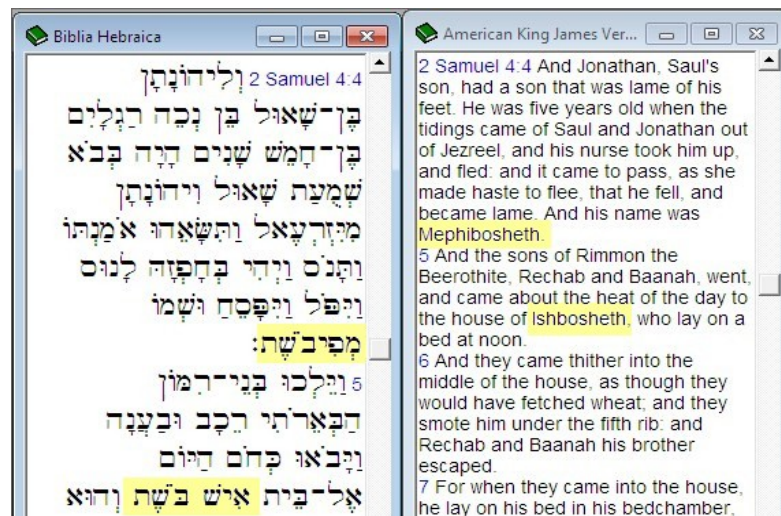


Fig. 5 :2 Sam. 4:4,5 illustrates the change of names from Meribbaal and Eshbaal to Mephibosheth and Ishbosheth. The anthroponyms appear untranslated in the AKJV.

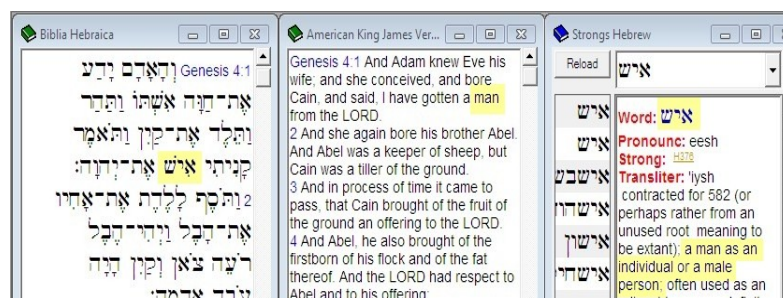


Fig. 6: The term אִישׁ (ish) as appearing in Gen. 4:1, is properly translated by the AKJV as "man". Strong's Hebrew Dictionary definition confirms this rendering when it states "a man as an individual or a male person". This is the first component of Ishbosheth's name. Regarding the second element, bosheth, as denoting "shame" see fig. 7 below.

Unlike the morphology of Ishbosheth's name, which does not represent a major difficulty, that of Mephibosheth is a little more problematic. There is no

¹² Judg. 6:22-32.

מִפִּי root in the Hebrew language that can explain the meaning of this component. Therefore, it is quite possible that we are dealing with an anthroponym composed of three elements; Me-phi-bosheth, all of which support the translation *"from the mouth of shame"*.¹³ The three morphological components of the name are found in different contexts in the Bible and are explained in Figure 7 below.

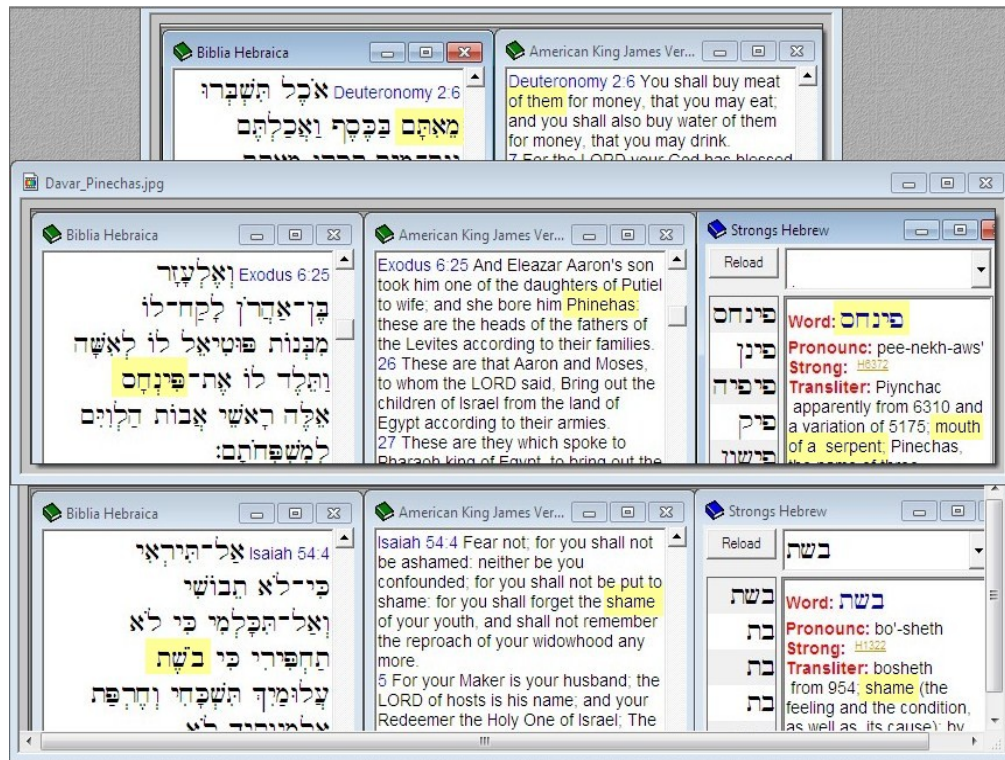


Fig. 7. The top row shows Deut. 2:6, where we find the word מֵאֵתָם (me'ittam) which the AKJV translates as "of them". As can be seen, מֵ (me) "of" or "from" here is identical to the first component of the name Me-phi-bosheth. The middle row shows Exod. 6:25 exhibiting the anthroponym פִּינְחָס, which is transcribed as "Phinehas" by the AKJV. Its meaning is provided by Strong's Dictionary as "Mouth of a serpent". פִּי (phi) "mouth" is identical with the second element of the name under consideration. In the lower row, finally, Isa. 54:4 is displayed. The term בֹּשֶׁת (bosheth) here, which is rendered as "shame" by the AKJV, is confirmed by the Strong's Dictionary. It constitutes the final component of our name.

Thus, we see that the alternative names, as revealed by their etymology, have a high pejorative sense; Ishbosheth meaning *"man of shame"* and Mephibosheth denoting *"from the mouth of shame"*. It is evident that the name of the Canaanite deity, Baal, has been replaced by the word for "shame". As it is easy to deduce, because of Samuel's syncretistic tendencies, the emendations were naturally not made by the prophet, but by some scribe of David (king who was an undisputed monotheist-Yahweist) who obviously considered Baal's name as being a shame.

¹³ See the article Mephibosheth in the Wikipedia. "The Hebrew name is מִפִּיבֹשֶׁת Mefivoshet, meaning "from the mouth of shame". <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mephibosheth>

Therefore, the presence of the name of Baal in members of Saul's family is a new indication of the polytheism that prevailed in the early Israelite monarchy, although it is also possible that the theophore was not a reference to the Canaanite god, but Yahweh whom the name of the native deity had already been assimilated. In any case, the internal testimony shows that Saul did not change anything the syncretistic process in which Yahweh continued being fused with Baal.

C)-SOLOMON:THE "WISEST" KING.

With the ascent of David to the throne the Mosaic monotheism was restored,¹⁴ and would seem to have achieved its final triumph. Nonetheless, Solomon, his son, whom some editor of the Bible catalogued as *"the wisest of men"*¹⁵ was responsible for reviving with greater force the Hebrew polytheism by building, apart from the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem, numerous other shrines for the foreign princesses with whom he married worshipped their respective deities.¹⁶ Those gods, whom Moses and the Psalmist called *"devils", "demons"*¹⁷ are the ones Solomon blatantly referred to in Ecclesiastes 2:8, when he said, *"I got me... the delights of the sons of men, a she-demon and some demons"*.

As it may seem to the reader that the author has intentionally modified the quoted text, an etymological explanation to justify such a translation is strictly needed. Again, we are fortunate to know a little of the Hebrew language, because this will help us to convey to our readers what Scripture is really saying in this text.

The translators of the Western versions, and among these the King James Version (KJV), for obvious reasons do not want to reveal the true rendering of the Hebrew words שְׂדֵדָה וְשִׂדּוֹת (sheed-da' ve-sheed-doth'), which is not *"musical instruments"*, but *"a she-demon and some demons"*.

14 This topic to be dealt with in another article.

15 1 Kgs. 3:12.

16 1 Kgs. 11:1-8.

17 Deut. 32:17; Ps.106:37.



Fig. 8. Original script of Eccl. 2:8. The words שָׂדָה וְשִׁדְדוֹת (sheed-da' ve-sheed-doth') are incorrectly translated by the AKJV as "musical instruments".

The denotation "*musical instruments*" has been explained by some commentators based on the name of a Phoenician woman, Sido by name, who according to the ancient Phoenician historian Sanchoniatho, was the inventor of music.¹⁸ Nevertheless, the internal textual evidence does not support this interpretation at all. If the terms in Ecclesiastes were derived from the name of the supposed inventor of music, Sido, the Bible would show these same original terms in the other passages in which the phrase is invariably translated as "*musical instruments*" or "*instruments of music*". But this is not the case, because the original expression in most of these other texts is not שָׂדָה וְשִׁדְדוֹת (sheedda veshiddoth) but כְּלֵי שִׁיר (keley sheer).

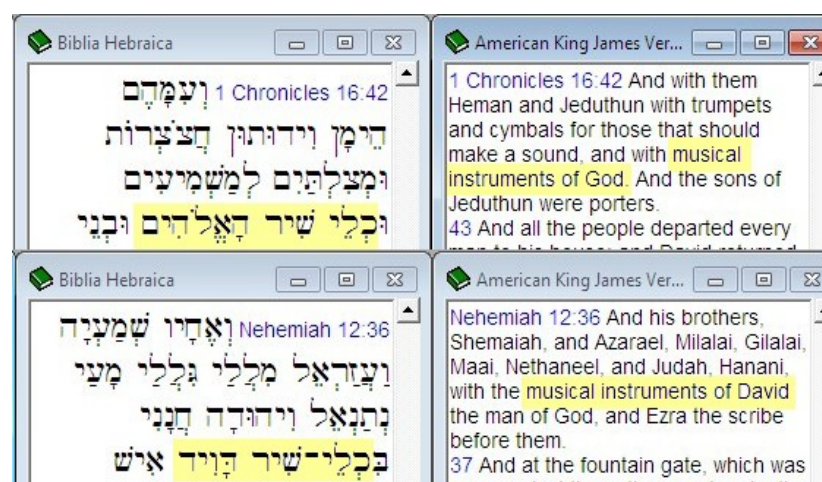


Fig. 9: On the top row 1 Chr. 16:42 is displayed, where the expression כְּלֵי שִׁיר הָאֱלֹהִים (keley sheer ha'elohim) is translated by the AKJV as "*musical instruments of God*". The lower row shows Neh. 12:36, in which the phrase כְּלֵי-שִׁיר דָּוִד (keley sheer david) stands for "*musical instruments of David*" in the AKJV.

The rendering of כְּלֵי (keley) as "*instruments*" and שִׁיר (sheer) as the adjective "*musical*" and the noun "*music*" is further confirmed by the etymological

¹⁸ "others (translate) "a species of musical compositions," derived from Sido, a celebrated Phoenician woman, to whom Sanchoniatho attributes the invention of music". Quotation from the commentaty of module **Treasury of Scripture Knowledge** in **Davar3** on the hebrew words *siddah veshiddoth* in Eccesiastes 2:8.

definitions in the Strong's Dictionary and Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon (BDB), as shown in Figure 10.

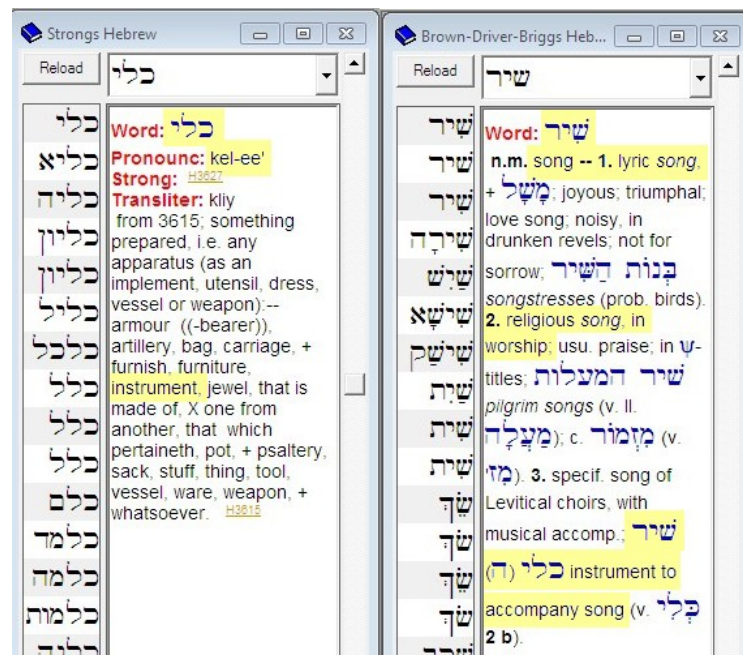


Fig. 10: Strong's Dictionary, on the left, showing multiple translations of the Hebrew word כְּלִי (keley), one of which is "instrument". The BDB, on the right, lists the three meanings of the term שִׁיר (sheer). First, as a common "song"; second, as a "religious song in worship," and third, in the phrase כְּלִי שִׁיר (ה) -keley (ha) sheer- denoting an "instrument to accompany a song".

An unique allusion to "*instruments of music*" with the hapax legomenon שְׁלֹשִׁים (shalosheem), lit. "*with three*" is found in 1 Samuel 18:6. The word derives from שְׁלוֹשׁ (shelosh), the Hebrew cardinal number "*three*", thus meaning in all probability, some "*three-stringed instrument*". Interestingly, a metaphorical text (Ecl. 12:4), describes the vocal cords of one who has reached old age as בָּנוֹת הַשִּׁיר (banoth hasheer) "*the daughters of music*", where undoubtedly the weak voice of an old man is referred to by that phrase.

All this examination of the texts makes us see the complete lack of morphological relationship between the terms שְׁדָּה וְשָׂדוֹת and כְּלִי שִׁיר. As the latter are rightly translated in all versions of the Bible as "*instruments of music*", then, due to the morphological difference between the two phrases, there is no way to get a similar denotation from the former. The versions that translate שְׁדָּה וְשָׂדוֹת as "*musical instruments*", therefore, break one of the fundamental rules of Linguistics: the morphological similarity of the words.

Having considered that the phrase שְׂדֵה וְשִׂדּוֹת does not mean “instruments of music”, now it is up to us to explain its true meaning. We base our translation on a rigorously semantic basis, by comparing the two terms that occur here in Eccl. 2:8, with the one that appears in Deut. 32:17 and Ps.106:37, שְׂדִים (shedeem), which is universally translated as “devils” or “demons”.



Fig. 11: It shows the texts of Deut. 32:17 and Ps. 106:37. In both cases, the original word שְׂדִים (shedeem) is properly translated by the AKJV as “devils”.¹⁹

If from the second word of Ecclesiastes, וְשִׂדּוֹת (*vesheeddoth*) we remove the copulative וְ (*ve*), which is the equivalent to our “and”,²⁰ we only have the noun שְׂדֵה (*sheeddoth*) left. If, moreover, we look closely, the two substantives in Ecclesiastes, שְׂדֵה and שְׂדֵה, are of the same root as that found in Deuteronomy and Psalms, שְׂדִים, sharing identical radicals: ש-ד. This term is vocalized in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary as *shade*, whose translation undoubtedly alludes to a “malignant being, a devil, a demon” (Fig. 12).



Fig. 12: Etymological definition of noun שֹׁד (shade) in Strong's Hebrew Dictionary as “a doemon (as malignant); a devil”.

¹⁹ The word preceding the noun shedeem (ל *la*) is the Hebrew prepositional prefix equivalent to our “to”. Thus, the translation of the whole verse reads: “Yes, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils”; that is, לְשִׂדִּים (*lashedeem*). For the Hebrew prepositions hit this link <https://uhg.readthedocs.io/en/latest/preposition.html>

²⁰ The Hebrew conjunction וְ is always written as an inseparable prefix in the second term. Example: Gen. 2:1 הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ (*hashamayim v'haaretz*) “the heavens and the earth”.

The different endings, הַ (-ah), וֹת (-oth) and יִם (-eem), are only indicative desinences of gender and number, the first of which being the feminine singular; the second, the feminine plural; and the third, the masculine plural. It should be noted, however, that some Hebrew plural masculine nouns bear the ending וֹת (-oth), as showed in fig. 11 below.²¹ Hence our proposed translation of שְׂדוֹת (sheeddoth) as a plural masculine noun denoting “demons”, conforming to this rule, is correct.



Fig. 13: An example that although being a masculine noun, in the plural a word is written with the feminine aformative וֹת (-oth). In the lower row we have Exod. 6:6, where the noun זְרוֹעַ (zeroa') “arm” is in its singular form. In the top row Deut. 33:27 displays the plural construction as זְרוֹעַת (zeor'oth) “arms”.

If translators in all versions, including the Hebrew Bible, have correctly rendered the term of Deut. 32:17 and Ps.106:37, שְׂדִים, as “devils” “demons”, and if שְׂדָה and שְׂדוֹת are evidently nouns derived from the same Hebrew root, then the translation we have made “a she-demon and some demons” etymologically is also accurate.

By comparing our verse and the report of Salomon's fall into polytheism a similar order between the list of gods and the syntactic construction in Ecclesiastes can be deduced. It is very instructive, in this sense, to note that the correct translation of the two terms in Ecclesiastes refers firstly to a demon of the feminine gender “a she-demon” followed by some demons of the

21 Wikibooks instructs us on the singular feminine endings: “Most feminine nouns end in either the letter ת or the letter ה”. As to the plural desinences, it states: “Feminine nouns change the gender suffix (the letter at the end of the word that tells us what gender the noun is) into וֹת (vav-tav). Masculine nouns change the gender suffix into יִם (yod-mem)”. In connection with masculine nouns ending in the affirmative וֹת (-oth): “Of course, there are some exceptions. For example, the noun שֻׁלְחָן (shulhan - table) is a masculine (ends in ן - noon), but its plural is שֻׁלְחָנוֹת (notice the וֹת at the end of the noun)”. <https://en.m.wikibooks.org/wiki/Hebrew/Nouns>

masculine gender. Interestingly, the list of strange gods whom Solomon built sanctuaries and worshipped (1 Kgs. 11: 5, 7) is headed by one goddess followed by several gods. The feminine divinity, as revealed by the morphology of its name and by its imagery discovered by archaeology was Ashtoreth.²² The male dieties are distinguished by bearing masculine names: Milcom, Chemosh and Molech. To these latter specific names the generic noun ('elohim) "gods" (v. 8) must be added, with which reference is undoubtedly made to the many other male divinities of all Solomon's foreign wives.

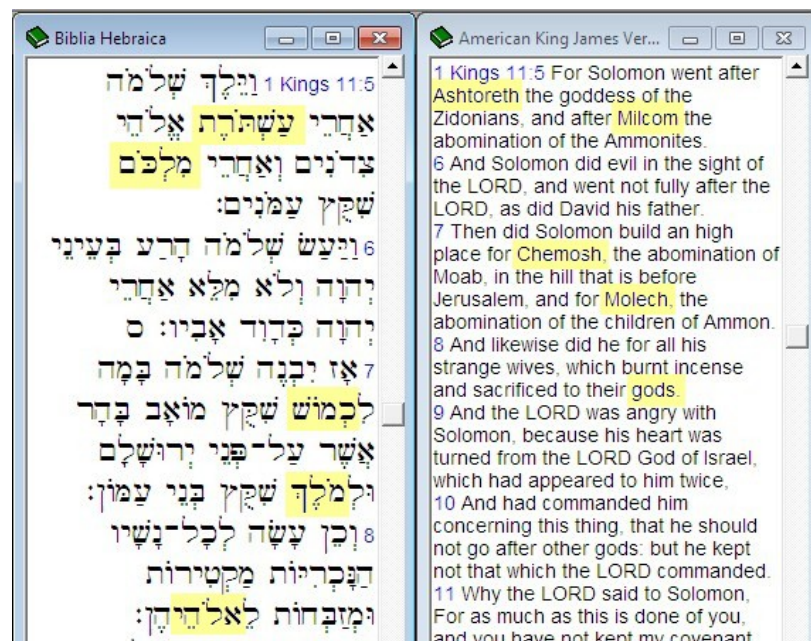


Fig 14: 1 Kgs. 11:5-8 mentioning the foreign gods that Solomon worshipped. Notice the order, where Ashtoreth, the popular Canaanite goddess, is placed first, followed by the national gods of Ammon (Milcom), Moab (Chemosh) and another Ammonite idol (Molech). Verse 8, at the end, refers to other gods worshipped by Solomon with the generic term *elohei*, construct form of the plural absolute *elohim*, "gods".

The order of the royal chronicler's list, placing first Ashtoreth, a female divinity, and then several male deities, fits perfectly with the syntax of Ecclesiastes where a she-devil is mentioned first followed by some male devils. Thus, the identification of the she-demon and the demons that Solomon boasts of having delighted in with the strange gods that the apostate adored not only has a parallel semantic basis, as has already been studied, but also has a similar syntactic parallelism principle, as we have just analyzed.

²² Note here the Hebrew feminine ending -eth, so characteristic of female nouns. As to the archaeological evidence of this goddess and her cult in the whole area of Middle East, including Canaan, Phoenicia and Israel, hit the link below. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astarte>

In fact, Jewish scholars do not deny that the text of Ecclesiastes is effectively referring to demons, but an explanation has been provided. Thus, in the Hebrew Midrash, a commentary on the biblical book, is said:

"The delights of the sons of men' are the hot baths; 'The demons'; these are the demons that heat the baths".²³

But this is an interpretation that really has no semantic basis on which to rely. There is no word in the text of Ecclesiastes that could suggest that reference is being made to hot baths. Nor is there any passage in any part of the Bible that links demons to hot baths. In fact, the word for "bath" never appears in the Old Testament. On the other hand, the term for "hot" in a physical sense is חם (kham),²⁴ a word that is neither morphologically nor metaphorically related to the root sh-d. The only existing textual parallels are found in the verses of Deut. 32:17 and Ps. 106:37. Therefore, there is no other way of interpreting the terms of Ecclesiastes but only in the light of this parallelistic context.

So, we insist, if Deut. 32:17 and Ps. 106:37 identifies other people's gods as "devils" and we know that Solomon built temples for his women's deities, and not only did that, but also worshipped them,²⁵ then it is not at all difficult to relate those idols to the demons that Moses condemned and the Psalmist remembered. The morphology and semantics of the terms of Eccl. 2:8, revealed in the light of the word in Deut. 32:17 and Ps. 106:37 confirms Solomon's terrible fall into idolatry, recorded by the royal chronicler; and the demons that so delighted this king were none other than the gods that he worshipped along with his wives.

Faced with all this evidence, in the end we wonder, what happened to the "wisest of men"? It is said that old age is synonymous with wisdom, but certainly the opposite happened to Solomon. Reaching old age plunged him into the most nefarious of ignorances, which, in turn, brought disastrous consequences for his people. Thus, after the death of the apostate, and the

²³ Eccl. Rab. 2,8.

²⁴ Comp. Exod. 16:21 the expression חם השמש (kham hashemesh) "the sun waxed hot".

²⁵ In 1 Kgs 11 it is expressly said of the Israelite king: "when Solomon was old, his wives turned away his heart after other gods" (v. 4), and "For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites" (v. 5).

cancomitant division of the kingdom, it is well known that the Northern monarchy of Israel was, with very few individual exceptions, wholly polytheistic and idolatrous, while in the Southern kingdom of Judah, monotheism, - or perhaps better said, henotheism - was never completely assured, alternating periods in which both religious experiences (henotheism and polytheism) prevailed. The repeated common phrase, which denounced the complacency for the strange cults of the Jewish kings, apparent adherents to Yahweh, was: *"But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places"*.²⁶

Indeed, neither the excellent actions of two of the last Jewish kings, Hezekiah and Josiah,²⁷ could uproot that pernicious custom. The prophet Jeremiah, who ministered in the days of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah toward the end of the kingdom of Judah, still denounced the existence of high places.²⁸

Thus we have come to the conclusion that although mosaic monotheism was latent as theory in the mind of some minority, the vast majority of Israelites were captivated by the Canaanite religion. The most serious of this situation is to realize that the phenomenon affected not only the common population, but eminent religious and political figures, apparent followers of Yahweh, were also involved in it. Thus, the characters of Samuel, Saul and Solomon reveal their true religious feeling; a mixture of syncretized henotheism with polytheist elements. As will be studied in a forthcoming paper, such religious syncretism was not to the liking of the true prophets of Yahweh, who, in their time, angrily denounced the religious behavior of their people as an infidelity and betrayal to the superior doctrine of monotheism taught by Moses. Here I only close this paper with what was said by Hosea the prophet:

*"And it shall be at that day, said the LORD, that you shall call me Ishi; and shall call me no more Baali. For I will take away the names of Baalim out of her mouth, and they shall no more be remembered by their name."*²⁹

²⁶ 2 Kgs 12:3.

²⁷ On the religious reforms of these monarchs, in their attempts to re-establish the original mosaic monotheism, comp. 2 Kgs 18:4; 23:4-20.

²⁸ Jer.17:3.

²⁹ Hos. 2:16-17:

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